THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) The original estimated cost of Golden Quadrilateral Project at 1999 price was Rs.25,055 crore (excluding interest during construction (IDC) and escalation). The expenditure as on 30.11.2005 on the project is Rs. 23559.21 crore. The final cost indication would be known after completion of all projects. However, the actual expenditure on the project is not likely to differ much from the estimated cost, allowing for normal inflation.

Safety on the National Highways

3316. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to setting up of a regulatory body to oversee the safety on the National Highways;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Committee on infrastructure has been recommended for setting up of such a body;

(c) if so, by when such a recommendation be made by the above committee; and

(d) what are the reasons for delay in setting up such a regulatory authority?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (d) A Committee has been appointed to deliberate and recommend on creation of a dedicated body on Road Safety and Traffic Regulations under the Chairmanship of Shri S. Sundar, Sr. Fellow, The Energy Research Institute. The Committee has been remitted to submit its recommendations by 31st January, 2006 to enable a final decision by Committee On Infrastructure chaired by the Prime Minister.

Shipping companies neglecting sea farers

3317. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the sea farers are easily abandoned and neglected by the shipping companies and ship owners despite the fact that they are the backbone of maritime economy which in turn drives the world economy;

(b) the legal and other processes available to protect; and

(c) when the sea farers international identity documents were revised after the twin tower attack in September 2001 and why such revision did not take place in India?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) In order to provide specific regulation to protect the seafarers, the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958, has been amended by Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Act, 2002. Following the amendment, Merchant Shipping (Recruitment and Placement of Seafarers) Rules, 2005 have been promulgated on 18.3.2005 to regulate and control recruitment and placement service. The Rules prescribe procedure for protection to the Seafarers from being stranded in foreign ports, protection from failure of Recruitment and Placement Service in meeting its obligations and provision for their repatriation.

(c) The seafarers identity document was revised by International Labour Organisation's (ILO) Seafarers' Identity Document Convention (Revised), 2003 (No 185) which was adopted in June, 2003 and came into force on 9th February, 2005. All Indian seafarers are issued Continuous Discharge Certificate-cum-Seafarers Identity Document in compliance with ILO Convention No. 108. In order to make the Continuous Discharge Certificate-cum-Seafarers Identity Document compliant with ILO Convention No. 185 the Government of India has ratified ILO Convention No. 108 on 17.1.2005 and thereby, under article 9 of International Labour Organization Convention No. 185, the existing Continuous Discharge-cum-Seafarers Identity Document which is in possession of Indian seafarers is considered as compliant with International Labour Organization Convention No. 185 under its "Transitional Provision".

Setting up of Orissa Maritime Academy

3318. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that with the approval of the Central Government, Orissa State has set up Orissa Maritime Academy to train Seamen for